

**GOVERNOR JENNIFER M. GRANHOLM**

Friday, July 28, 2006

Hello, this is Governor Jennifer Granholm.

Few issues touch our lives more directly than health care.

When you or someone you care about is sick, the last thing you should worry about is how much the doctor or the medicine will cost.

But for too many Michigan citizens, it is a big worry. Everywhere I travel, I hear the concern and the fear.

In Lansing, it was the auto worker who'd just had surgery, but was losing his health care when the plant closed.

In Detroit, it was the entrepreneur who couldn't afford health coverage on his own.

Up north, it was the senior citizen who couldn't afford her prescription drugs.

The stories are too common – and they share a common theme.

No matter their age, their income or their hometown, the citizens I've met are struggling to make sure that their families have access to the health care they need at a price they can afford.

That's why, since the day I took office, I've been working to make health care accessible and affordable for every person in Michigan.

In just three years, we have restored health care coverage to more than 40,000 people who had been cut off by the previous administration. We've negotiated the nation's first bulk-buying pool for prescription drugs. And we've created the MIRx discount card to make medication more affordable for more than 37,000 people.

15 additional Federally Qualified Health Centers have been established around the state. We helped ensure that the Detroit Medical Center would continue operating and increased the number county health plans that provide health coverage to tens of thousands of people.

And earlier this year, I proposed the MI First Health Care Plan to make access to affordable health insurance available to every citizen in Michigan.

The MI First Health Care Plan will not only expand access, but it will help reduce the cost we all pay. Currently, health care providers and insurance companies subsidize the cost of health care for the uninsured. These costs add \$730 per year to your health insurance and mine.

By making access to health coverage universal, we can expand access for those without care while bringing down the cost of care for everyone.

Over the next week, I'll be meeting with people across Michigan to discuss the impact of rising health care costs. I want to hear their stories and share my plan with them.

Expanding access to affordable health care is the right thing to do for our families and for our businesses – and as Governor, it's an issue I'll continue fighting for on behalf of all our citizens.

Thank you for listening.